CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~for detecting~~ that detects voice activity in a communication signal, said apparatus comprising:

~~a)~~ filter means for performing an estimation or a suppression of an offset component of ~~the~~ a level of said communication signal;

~~b)~~ parameter control means ~~(46)~~ for controlling a filter parameter of said filter means based on an output of said filter means; and

~~c)~~ limitation means ~~(16; 35, 39)~~ for limiting said suppression or said estimation of said offset component in response to said output of said filter means,

wherein said filter means comprises a notch-type filter with a notch at zero frequency, and

said limitation means comprises a non-linear element with a limitation characteristic for suppressing transmission of negative signals through a recursive path of said notch-type filter.

2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

level calculation means ~~(42)~~ for calculating a short-term level of said communication signal, and

voice activity control means ~~(48)~~ for comparing input and output levels of said filter means.

3. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said offset component is a noise floor component of the level of said communication signal.

4. (Canceled).

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said filter means comprises a low-pass filter for extracting said offset component, and said limitation means ~~(35, 39)~~ comprises:

comparing means ~~(39)~~ for comparing said extracted offset component with said communication signal and

switching means ~~(35)~~ for selecting one of said extracted offset component and said communication signal in response to an output of said comparing means ~~(39)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said parameter control means ~~(48)~~ is adapted to set said filter parameter to a first value which leads to a lower tracking speed of said estimation,

if when the level of said communication signal falls below the a level of said estimated offset component, and to set said filter parameter to a second value which leads to a higher tracking speed of said estimation, if when the level of said communication signal is higher than the level of said estimated offset component.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6,

wherein said parameter control means (46) is adapted to apply an exponential adaptation of said filter parameter within the a limitation of predetermined parameter values.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of detecting voice activity in a communication signal, said method comprising the steps of:

a) filtering an offset component of the a level of said communication signal;

b) controlling a filter parameter used in said filtering step, based on the a result of said filtering step; and

c) limiting said filtering step in response to the result of said filtering step,

wherein said filtering is adapted to suppress said offset component by applying a filter characteristic with a notch at zero frequency, and

said limiting is performed by applying a limitation characteristic for suppressing transmission of negative signals.

9. (Canceled).

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 8,

wherein said filtering ~~step~~ is adapted to extract said offset component, and

said ~~limitation step~~ limiting further comprises: ~~the steps of~~

comparing the extracted offset component with the level of said communication signal and

selecting one of said extracted offset component and said level of said communication signal in response to ~~the~~ a comparing result.